

has a great deal of mining that takes place in his own district, came to this issue and wanted to make necessary changes for all the right reasons. As I took over the subcommittee chairmanship early this year, we decided we would build on that record and that effort of Chairman RAHALL.

In response to complaints, the minority has raised about having more hearings on this measure, let me tell you about the good work that the subcommittee and the committee has done.

The Subcommittee on Energy and Minerals, we've held four hearings this year on H.R. 2262, the 1872 mining law. Two of them, one in Elko, Nevada, with Members of both parties well-represented and Senator REID, the other one in Tucson, Arizona, provided valuable opportunities for local input from community citizens. In total, we have heard from over 33 witnesses in two field hearings and a multitude of hearings here in our Nation's Capital. We have done what you're supposed to do in the process. We've listened. We've made changes.

Those hearings led to significant improvements in the bill, improvements supported by both the conservation community as well as the mining industry. That's not to say that everybody has gotten everything they want because, of course, that never happens in this process. No bill will ever be perfect on all sides, but this is a bill that has had thorough vetting and due, some would say past due, for all the attention this matter has gotten over two decades.

I would also note that there's a long history as it relates to the mining law reform, the history that really pre-dates this legislation, as I noted.

So I think it's important to understand that we have taken into account over the last two decades hearings that have been held in the following States: Nevada, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska, all States in which mining is of critical importance.

In short, the need for mining law reform is not a new issue. It's one that has extensive legislative history. The flaws of the current law are well-debated and analyzed.

I appreciate the leadership's interest in H.R. 2262 and Chairman RAHALL's leadership and look forward to the debate on the amendments before us.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO).

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, I come from northern Illinois, an area that has over 2,500 factories. I've spent about three-fourths of my time in Congress dealing with manufacturing issues and traveled the world working on different projects that have different processes, and this bill is really, really bad for people who are interested in keeping manufacturing jobs in the United States. Therefore, I rise in opposition to the rule governing the Hardrock Mining and Reclamation Act of 2007.

Twenty-six amendments from both Democrats and Republicans were submitted, but only seven were approved for the House for debate for 10 minutes apiece. The bill proposes to make huge changes to an important sector of our economy, and the bill, therefore, deserves more than a little over 2 hours of debate.

If the underlying bill is enacted as currently drafted, it poses an unacceptable threat to the health of our manufacturing and defense industrial base. Without agriculture, mining and manufacturing, we become a Third World Nation.

U.S. mining operations provide approximately 50 percent of the metals needed by American manufacturers. Everybody in Congress, Mr. Speaker, interested in manufacturing needs to listen to this, because if this bill passes, this makes us more dependent upon China to get our minerals for manufacturing.

Many of these minerals, gold, silver, copper, platinum, molybdenum, beryllium, titanium, zinc, magnesium and nickel are used in manufacturing applications from industrial motors to satellites. Thus, the core of our industrial minerals is what we're discussing today. Over the past few years, the cost of these raw materials has gone through the roof. We're putting the viability of our manufacturers in America at stake.

When I chaired the Small Business Committee, I held two historic hearings on the spike in metal prices and what it means for manufacturers, both large and small. No one recommended at those hearings that we should make it more difficult, and thus more expensive, to mine in the United States.

Many of the alternative sources of these minerals are also located in countries that are not close allies of us. Many of these minerals are also critical for the production of defense equipment. I'm concerned that we may find that just as America's energy security is largely dependent on the goodwill of OPEC, our national security will be largely dependent on China's goodwill as we compete for the metals and rare Earth minerals that feed our defense industrial base.

Over half of the high-end magnet production that contains aluminum, nickel, and cobalt comes from China, and 100 percent of the rare Earth minerals used in magnets is found in China. The magnets are used in advanced missile guidance systems such as JDAM.

I'm not aware of anybody that has claimed that the increased regulatory burden, an 8 percent gross income royalty interest in new production and a 4 percent increase on retroactive production, will help to improve the domestic supply of minerals or help lower their costs.

Our manufacturing workers are the best and most productive workers in the world. They have been beset by cheap labor overseas, rising energy costs, unfair trade practices. And now

this Congress, this Congress, Mr. Speaker, will make it more difficult for the American worker to keep his job in manufacturing because this Congress will make the raw materials so expensive that what will happen, the U.S. mining companies may go out of business, and then we will be totally dependent on foreign countries to keep up the mineral supply for our manufacturing base.

This is an issue that if you vote "yes" on this rule, if you vote "yes" on the bill, it will destroy America's manufacturing jobs. Maybe I get too passionate when it comes to protecting America's manufacturing jobs. I've visited hundreds and hundreds of factories throughout the world to make sure that the United States is way out front in technology and innovation, and in fact, when I hear so much talk going on on the other side of the aisle about innovation, about competitiveness, then you come right back and the very feedstock for American manufacturing you want to tax out of business.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bad bill for American workers. This is a bad bill for American workers. This is a bad bill for American workers because it says let's just tax the minerals you need to make things that go out the door out of business. You might as well put another tax on natural gas. In fact, the Democrats did the same thing by taking away the tax break for exploration of natural gas, which is 80 percent of the feedstocks for plastics.

And so here we are again, this Congress destroying American manufacturing jobs. Vote "no" on the rule and "no" on the bill.

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Arizona (Ms. GIFFORDS).

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Hardrock Mining Reclamation Act. Long overdue, the time for mining law reform has finally arrived.

The 1872 mining law was enacted 40 years before Arizona was even a State. At that time, it encouraged the development and the expansion of the American West. My district of southern Arizona had a town of Bisbee that during the turn of the century actually had its own stock exchange and was the largest community from St. Louis to San Francisco. The copper star on the State of Arizona's flag symbolized the importance when we achieved statehood of the copper industry.

However, times have changed. Today's West now depends on the health, as well as the conservation, of our fragile environment as much as it relies on mining.

H.R. 2262 is a solid first step. It provides impact assistance to mining communities and establishes a practical and a modern approach to reclaiming and restoring the land as well as water resources.

As this legislation progresses, I further encourage Members to look specifically at the royalty provisions. We